

~~TOP SECRET SENSITIVE~~

19 May 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Morning Meeting of 19 May 1969

DD/I noted that he saw General Carroll on Saturday and was advised that the Chairman, JCS and the Secretary of Defense are to meet on Thursday before some Congressional group, by which time they would appreciate having the readout analysis of the most recent KH-4 mission. DD/I commented that the necessary arrangements to meet this deadline have been completed and that Bruce Clarke's memorandum on patterns of ABM deployment will be provided at the same time. The Clarke memorandum demonstrates that the thrust of the Soviet ABM deployment is with the inferior SS-11 rather than with the SS-9.

Godfrey reported that a world-wide reaction memorandum to President Nixon's speech is ready for distribution.

D/ONE commented that Secretary Laird apparently appeared on television yesterday, stating that the SS-9 has a [ ] capability. He noted the possible contradictions with future Estimates.

[ ] briefed on several indicators that the Navy is under way to augment its intelligence collection budget. After some discussion the Director asked [ ] to get together with Bross in order that a proper question can be phrased to DIA or the Navy with respect to its plans and intentions.

Carver pointed to increased ground action in the vicinity of the 18th ARVN Division/III Corps area.

Carver noted that he has been asked to meet with Secretary Laird at 11:15 a.m. today.

Maury briefed on his recent visit to Cape Kennedy for the Apollo 10 shot. He noted that he visited briefly with Dr. Foster, who urged that, whenever possible, we coordinate with DD/R&E on material to be provided Senator Symington.

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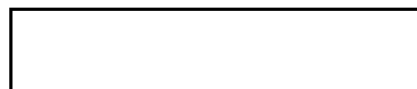
Maury called attention to the Warren Unna article on Congressman Rivers in today's Washington Post.



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DD/P clarified the earlier confusion growing out of a Post editorial which observed that an "Iranian solution" may be adopted to solve the IPC/Peru problem. It appears that Ambassador Korry was referring to the Iranian Consortium--not to a CIA involvement.

The Director noted that Gordon Gray visited with a Mr. Charles Stevenson, a Harvard graduate student who is writing a paper on the early days of the Laotian neutrality coalition. Stevenson told Mr. Gray that prior to their conversation he had met with CIA officials to obtain their background information. The Director asked whether we have any evidence that such conversations did take place, and the DD/I noted that John Kerry King did meet with Mr. Stevenson and treated him at arm's length and that an appropriate Memorandum for the Record was written.



L. K. White

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\*Extracted and sent to action officer

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# Mendel Rivers: Power to Raise and Support Armies?

By Warren Unna

Washington Post Staff Writer

IN HIS private moments of personal exasperation former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara would complain to friends that "the way to end the Military-Industrial Complex is to end the seniority system in Congress."

He might have gone a step further and offered in evidence as Exhibit A the personage of Lucius Mendel Rivers, the pithy and peppery chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

The snowdy-mannered South Carolinian seems in word and deed to regard himself as the embodiment of Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution:

"The Congress shall have power . . . to raise and support armies . . . provide and maintain a Navy . . . make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces."

These words are emblazoned in gold like the Writ upon the elevated desk from which Rivers looks down at the generals and admirals and civilian secretaries who come before his Committee for military goods and services.

The House Armed Services Committee is a principal legislative spillway through which military industrial influence flows in Washington.

With the stroke of a pen, it can sanction multi-million dollar nuclear frigates that admirals dare not request. It may provide squadrons of aircraft no Air Force general would seriously consider for his inventory. It countermands Secretaries of Defense with the lofty aplomb that an aldermanic board might reserve for the village drunk.

And while Rivers' House Armed Services Committee is only one of the four committees with a voice in military matters, it has a key function of originating authorization and, in the opinion of one Committee member, has the unique reputation of asking Pentagon witnesses, "Do you have enough?" instead of the more usual, "Do you really have to have it?"

SOME YEARS ago, there used to be what were known as the "Fearless Five" opposing Rivers and his majority on military authorization matters. Today the consistent opposition in the 40-member Committee is down to three, Reps. Robert L. Leggett (D-Calif.), Otis G. Pike (D-N.Y.) and Lucien N. Nedzi (D-Mich.), with an occasional assist across the aisle from Rep. Charles W. Whalen (R-Ohio).

Unlike the Senate, with fewer members and multiple committee assignments, a House member has to make the best of the one major committee he is given, hope to be assigned to a reasonable number of subcommittees and then, God and Mendel willing, perhaps some day a subcommittee chairmanship of his very own.

For their transgressions, Leggett, Pike, Nedzi and Whalen each sit on only two subcommittees instead of the average three to four. Pike was in line to become chairman of the key Armed Services Investigating Subcommittee this year after the retirement of Rep. Porter Hardy (D-Va.). Chairman Rivers suddenly saw fit to reorganize the Subcommittee, make himself chairman and bump Pike off entirely.

MILITARY authorization, with Chairman Rivers' stamp, gets a quick wave past from the House Rules Committee and splendid cooperation from an admiring Speaker John W. McCormack (D-Mass.) for a smooth passage on the floor.

Last July, when there was a little unexpected trouble from Pike over the pyramiding costs from Lockheed for the new Cheyenne battle helicopter, Chairman Rivers had Speaker McCormack step down from the rostrum to say a few words.

"Where the national interest of our country is concerned," the Speaker declared, "if I am going to err in judgment I would rather err on the side of strength . . . I am willing to follow the leadership of the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. Rivers)."

This year Rivers took by surprise even his committee stalwarts by urging a \$14 million starter on a \$62 million subsidy to Northrop Aviation. This is to help the company retool its F-5 "Freedom Fighter" to compete for export sales with France's Mystere. One of Rivers' closest colleagues, Rep. Durward G. (Doc) Hall (R-Mo.), felt impelled to inquire within the closed-door hearing why Northrop itself wasn't paying for its own re-tooling.

"It just doesn't happen in the industry," the hearing transcript has Rivers responding. "Nobody does."

Two weeks after its benediction at the Committee's hands, the Rivers-Northrop amendment was approved by the House, 341 aye, 21 nay.

LAST JULY, Chairman Rivers suddenly saw fit to tack an amendment onto the Military Procurement Authorization Bill requiring that the freight airlifted from one domestic U.S. military base to another be carried by jet planes instead of the traditional propeller-powered craft.

This meant that Overseas National Airways, whose then chairman, George Thompson, was a longtime Rivers ally, would be able to take over the contract from the military's traditional carrier, Saturn Airways. It

meant, according to debate on the House floor by Congressman Leggett, that ONA would then receive some \$20.8 million in annual military carrying business compared to the \$6 million it has been getting.

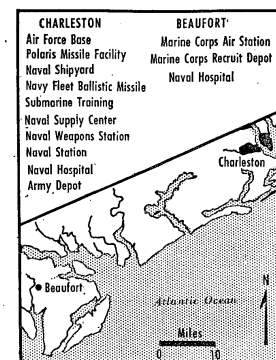
When the entire \$21.6 billion Military Procurement Authorization Bill went into conference with the Senate, Sen. Howard W. Cannon (D-Nev.) suddenly whisked out a whole exchange of letters between Rivers and Defense Secretary Clark Clifford and Air Force Secretary Harold Brown. The correspondence made it perfectly clear that the Pentagon didn't welcome Rivers' demand for a change to jets which would do away with an adequate propeller service and cost considerably more.

"I just knew it was a helluva bamboozle," Cannon said in recalling the incident the other day. "I had the letters read into the record and at the end Rivers just threw his hands into the air."

By the time a compromise was reached, the controversy had delayed the Nation's \$21.6 billion Military Procurement Authorization Bill in conference for two months, through the presidential party conventions.

LAST SUMMER'S Military Procurement Bill also contained authorization for the then "Sentinel" Anti-Ballistic Missile, a multi-billion dollar item now so predominantly in the public eye but then apparently so insignificant that Chairman Rivers, according to his colleagues, hardly saw fit to mention it in his congressional presentation.

Similarly, his Committee colleagues say, Chairman Rivers has hardly seen fit to mention the tremendous cost overrun in Lockheed's contract to build the C-5A plane. As a matter of fact, Committee chief counsel John R. (Russ) Blandford spent considerable time two weeks ago, behind closed doors, of course, telling Committee members there



really wasn't an overrun and that the C-5A isn't really costing the Nation much at all.

And when it came to the pyramiding costs on Lockheed's new Cheyenne battle helicopter, Congressman Pike apparently found it so difficult to gain his Chairman's interest he decided to interrogate the Army on his own and put out his own findings without the blessing of a subcommittee.

Chairman Rivers, who traditionally has shown less interest in the Army than he has in either the Air Force or Navy, did show interest this year in ordering an investigation into reports of cost overruns in the Army's MBT-70 "Dream Tank," a joint venture by General Motors, Chrysler and Germany's Daimler-Benz. The MBT-70, with over \$1 billion already sunk into it, now is expected never to roll.

However, when congressman Stratton publicly referred to the tank as a "billion dollar boo-boo," Rivers thought that was going too far. "I'm not trying to put the lid on anything," Rivers declared. But Stratton has said no more.

ALTHOUGH IN its Congressional Directory listing the House Armed Services Committee consists of 40 members, 23 Democrats and 17 Republicans, those familiar with its inner workings say the committee really boils down to two: Chairman Rivers, who has sat in Congress 28 of his 63 years and been Committee chairman for the past four; and Chief Counsel Blandford, a one-time Republican lawyer from Buffalo, a tough, blunt-speaking brigadier general in the Marine Corps Reserve who appears in Committee group photos sitting in the very center of the congressional members with the rest of the professional staff strewn below, and who always is referred to in Committee hearing transcripts as "Mr." just like the Congressmen.

Blandford, who almost daily can be found lunching at his special alcove table in Capitol Hill's plush Rotunda Restaurant—usually with a defense industry representative—enjoys a fine tandem relationship with the Chairman. This almost was interrupted this year when Blandford's cause was being advised to make him Secretary of Defense. Release of his name as Secretary was blocked by a House associate of Blandford's on the House Armed Services Committee staff and now

White House Assistant for Congressional Relations, Bryce N. Harlow, counseled the President to look further.

Blandford also enjoys an unusual relationship with the rest of the Congressmen on the Committee. One member (the members caution they can't afford to be quoted directly, not even when referring to Blandford) said that when he once phoned Blandford for help in preparing a speech Blandford commanded: "Be at my office at 7 a.m.," and then hung up the phone. Another said that Blandford tried to intercede with the Pentagon to prevent him (the Congressman) from getting a top-secret briefing. A third recalled that when Rivers, some years back, was particularly anxious to get through a military pay raise bill with the Rivers name on it, Blandford telephoned the Congressman to inquire: "You're with the Chairman, aren't you?" "You're not going to vote against him, are you?"

DURING THIS year's supplemental Military Procurement Authorization hearings, the ones which authorized the Northrop F-5 subsidy, Blandford used the occasion to volunteer: "I think it simply boils down to this . . . if we can't authorize the money to retool the company that can manufacture the F-5, then, as sure as I am sitting here in this chair, before we can finish, somewhere along the line, either this year or next, Chinese Nationalists, the Koreans, the Vietnamese, the Thais, the Greeks, the Turks, will be getting F-4s at a much higher price—because we are going to have to keep them in business, or get out. That is all there is to it. We might as well face the fact."

A few minutes later, in expanding on the Chairman's comment about there being no F-5s in Latin America, Blandford came up, ex parte: "We lost the market down there." A bit earlier in the same hearing, in touting the superior qualities of the F-5 as a U.S. export product, Blandford saw fit to assure the Committee: "I don't own any Northrop stock."

While the Rivers-Blandford team is the mainstay of the House Armed Services Committee, some of the congressional members are aware of what is occasionally called the "Steering Committee," sometimes the "Policy Committee." Who exactly is on it, and how many of them, apparently is not a matter of official Committee record. But the chosen few are believed by the unchosen majority to rendezvous in Puerto Rico each Christmas time to discuss the coming year's agenda. Then, at the opening of each congressional session, Blandford hands Rivers a list of 10 or 11 resolutions authorizing his powers as Chairman. They are duly voted by a membership which thereafter finds itself completely subject to his Chairman's whims.

MEMBERS used to have 10 minutes to question a Pentagon witness as they represented their constituents in examining the Defense Department's lion's share of the national budget. But all that abruptly changed this year when one member sleepily expressed surprise that the individual questioning time wasn't five minutes, as he had assumed. Chairman Rivers immediately rectified that little time-saver and now has installed an alarm clock which bongs the end of each Congressman's five minutes time at bat.

Members out of favor with Rivers say they find themselves showing up at the closed-door 10 a.m. meetings expected to raise their hands and vote "aye" to a pile of documents they've had no time to study. Hearings usually complete their cycle on Thursday afternoon. Minority views must be in by Friday. The military authorization then quickly moves to the House Rules Committee the following Monday. Even committee members have their first chance to see the actual committee report when the bill is on the floor—and usually passed—on Tuesday.

Mendel Rivers once confided to a colleague: "I could defeat Strom Thurmond any day in the week. But I don't want to be South Carolina Senator. I've got the most powerful position in the U.S. Congress." Taking into consideration the \$80 billion Defense spending program over which he presides and his political home town of Charleston, bristling with land and sea bases and airfields and other installations, it is highly tempting to agree with him.